

***Remarks***

Claims 92-99, 101-104, 106-154 are currently pending in the application. Claims 94, 104, 118, 135 and 143 are sought to be amended. Claims 155-160 are sought to be added. These changes do not introduce any new matter or raise any new issues requiring further search by the Examiner. Entry of these amendments is therefore respectfully requested. Based on the above amendments and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all outstanding rejections, and that all the pending claims be passed to allowance.

***I. Rejection of Claims 104 and 118-154 under 35 U.S.C. § 103***

The Examiner has rejected claims 104 and 118-154 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 based on U.S. Patent No. 5,856,788 to Walter *et al.* Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

The undersigned thanks the Examiner for granting an interview on July 21, 2003. As discussed during that interview, Walter *et al.* fails to perform multiple reads of a plurality of RFID tags to avoid time slot contention since the tags disclosed by Walter *et al.* do not respond during one of a plurality of time slots, as recited in amended claims. Furthermore, Walter *et al.* also do not disclose a tag reader that interrogates a tag identified by a plurality of bits, wherein the tag reader uses a first plurality of the plurality of (ID) bits during a first read and a second plurality of the plurality of (ID) bits during a second read. Rather, Walter *et al.* interrogates a plurality of tags each having a unique identification using one bit at a time, referred to by Walter *et al.* as "bitwise interrogating." There is absolutely no suggestion in Walter *et al.* that a plurality of bits be used to interrogate the tags nor that using a plurality of bits would work using the algorithm described by Walter *et al.* The Examiner has agreed with this point (as summarized in the Interview Summary Form (Paper No. 22)).

Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 104 and 118-154 are patentable over the art of record, and respectfully request that these claims be passed to allowance.

**II. Conclusion**

All of the Examiner's stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below if such a call would facilitate the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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